

THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) An input device configured for use with a processing unit in communication with the input device and a touch-sensitive monitor, the input device comprising:

a main body having a distal operative end; and

a rollerball positioned within a bearing at said distal operative end, said bearing retaining said rollerball so that said rollerball is capable of rolling within said bearing, and wherein movement of said rollerball is detectable by the processing unit,

wherein said main body, said rollerball and said bearing are each formed of an anti-bacterial material ~~or covered with an anti-bacterial coating~~.

2. (Original) The input device of claim 1, wherein said main body further comprises additional buttons, and wherein pressing of said additional buttons is detectable by the processing unit.

3. (Original) The input device of claim 2, wherein said additional buttons are color-coded to denote different functionality.

4. (Original) The input device of claim 1, wherein said rollerball is configured to click when the input device is pressed against a surface, and wherein the click of said rollerball is detectable by the processing unit.

5. (Original) The input device of claim 1, wherein said main body is shaped like a pen.

6. (Canceled)

7. (Canceled)

8. (Previously presented) The input device of claim 1, wherein the input device is configured to wirelessly communicate with the processing unit.

9. (Currently amended) An input device configured for use with a processing unit in communication with the input device and a touch-sensitive monitor, the input device comprising

a shaft-like main body having a distal operative end, wherein said shaft-like main body is formed of an anti-bacterial plastic;

an anti-bacterial rollerball assembly located at said distal operative end of said main body, wherein an entirety of said anti-bacterial rollerball assembly is formed of an anti-bacterial material, said rollerball assembly comprising a rollerball retained within a bearing, said rollerball assembly configured to electrically communicate with the processing unit, said bearing retaining said rollerball so that said rollerball is capable of rolling within said bearing, and wherein movement of said rollerball is detectable by the processing unit so that a user may input digital data into the touch-sensitive monitor through said rollerball assembly; and

a plurality of anti-bacterial lateral buttons positioned on said main body, wherein said plurality of lateral buttons are configured to electrically communicate with the processing unit.

10. (Original) The input device of claim 9, wherein said plurality of lateral buttons are color-coded to denote different functionality.

11. (Original) The input device of claim 9, wherein said rollerball is configured to click when the input device is pressed against a surface, and wherein the click of said rollerball is detectable by the processing unit.

12. (Original) The input device of claim 9, wherein said main body is shaped like a pen.

13. (Currently amended) A medical information system, comprising:
a workstation having a processing unit;
an electronic white board having a display screen in communication with said workstation; and
a pen-shaped input device, wherein an entirety of the pen-shaped input device is formed of anti-bacterial material ~~or covered with an anti-bacterial coating~~, said pen-shaped input device comprising:

a main body having a distal operative end; and
a rollerball assembly located at said distal operative end of said main body, said rollerball assembly comprising a rollerball retained within a bearing, said rollerball assembly in communicate with said processing unit, said bearing retaining said rollerball so that said rollerball is capable of rolling within said bearing, and wherein said processing unit detects movement of said rollerball.

14. (Original) The medical information system of claim 13, wherein said white board displays patient scheduling information on said display screen.

15. (Original) The medical information system of claim 13, wherein said input device is configured to directly contact said display screen in order to input and manipulate data displayed on said display screen.

16. (Original) The medical information system of claim 15, wherein said input device is configured to click and drag digital data items displayed on said display screen.

17. (Original) The medical information system of claim 15, wherein said input device is configured to electronically write on said display screen so that said processing unit detects movement of said rollerball and displays corresponding information on said display screen.

18. (Canceled)

19. (Original) The medical information system of claim 13, further comprising a central database in communication with said workstation.

20. (Original) The medical information system of claim 13, wherein said workstation further comprises a monitor having a monitor screen in communication with said processing unit, and wherein said input device is configured to directly contact said monitor screen in order to input and manipulate data displayed on said monitor screen.

21. (Original) The medical information system of claim 13, wherein said input device further comprises a plurality of anti-bacterial lateral buttons positioned on said main body, wherein said plurality of lateral buttons are configured to electrically communicate with the processing unit.

22. (Currently amended) A method of inputting data into a processing unit of a computer, wherein the processing unit displays the data on a screen of a monitor in communication with the processing unit, comprising:

providing an anti-bacterial rollerball at a distal end of an anti-bacterial input device, wherein an entirety of the anti-bacterial input device, including the anti-bacterial rollerball, is formed of an anti-bacterial material;

electrically connecting the input device with the processing unit so that the processing unit detects movement of the rollerball;

contacting the screen with the input device so that the rollerball is in direct contact with the screen;

detecting movement of the rollerball by the processing unit; and

displaying data on the screen that corresponds to said detecting step when the input device is activated for data input.

23. (Currently amended) The method of claim [[23]] 22, further comprising activating the input device for data input by pressing the input device into the screen until the rollerball clicks.

24. (Original) The method of claim 22, further comprising single clicking the rollerball in order to activate a click and drag function.

25. (Original) The method of claim 23, further comprising double clicking the rollerball in order to activate an electronic writing function.